

103^D CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. 2377

To establish a national advisory referendum on limiting the terms of Members of Congress at the general election of 1994.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

AUGUST 10 (legislative day, AUGUST 8), 1994

Mrs. HUTCHISON (for herself, Mr. FAIRCLOTH, Mr. COATS, Mr. SIMPSON, and Mr. BURNS), introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration

A BILL

To establish a national advisory referendum on limiting the terms of Members of Congress at the general election of 1994.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “National Voter Oppor-
5 tunity To Inform Congress Effectively on Term Limits
6 Act” (the “VOICE Act”).

7 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.**

8 (a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds that—

1 (1) the right of citizens of the United States to
2 vote is a fundamental right;

3 (2) the right of citizens of the United States to
4 have an effective voice in the decisionmaking proc-
5 esses of the Congress is grounded in the right to pe-
6 tition and is a fundamental part of American democ-
7 racy, and Congress should provide an opportunity
8 for citizens to express their views on important pub-
9 lic issues;

10 (3) there is an increasing public sentiment and
11 demand for limiting the terms of members of Con-
12 gress; and

13 (4) voters in 15 States have already voted and
14 approved State laws to limit the terms of their con-
15 gressional delegations, and voters in other States
16 have expressed their interest in also having the op-
17 portunity to also vote on term limits for members of
18 Congress.

19 (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are—

20 (1) to give the citizens of every State the oppor-
21 tunity to have a voice on whether or not the terms
22 of members of Congress should be limited; and

23 (2) to conduct a national non binding referen-
24 dum on term limits in the 1994 general election,
25 thereby affording an opportunity to study the fea-

1 sibility of conducting national non binding referenda
2 on other important issues in the future.

3 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

4 As used in this Act—

5 (1) the term “advisory question” means the
6 question stated in section 4(b);

7 (2) the term “general election” means an elec-
8 tion for Federal office held in 1994;

9 (3) the term “Federal office” means the office
10 of a member of the House of Representatives, Sen-
11 ate, or Delegate to the Congress, or resident com-
12 missioner of a territory of the United States; and

13 (4) the term “State election agency” means the
14 official agency of a State or territory charged with
15 the legal responsibility for conducting general elec-
16 tions within that jurisdiction.

17 **SEC. 4. PROCEDURES FOR NATIONAL VOTER OPPORTUNITY**
18 **TO INFORM CONGRESS EFFECTIVELY ON**
19 **TERM LIMITS NON BINDING REFERENDUM.**

20 (a) IN GENERAL.—Each State shall place on the gen-
21 eral election ballot the advisory question concerning term
22 limits for members of Congress.

23 (b) ADVISORY QUESTION.—Not later than August 1,
24 1994, the Clerk of the House of Representatives and the
25 Secretary of the Senate shall jointly certify to the appro-

1 puate State election agencies for inclusion on the general
2 election ballot in each congressional district, the following
3 question:

4 “NATIONAL ADVISORY REFERENDUM ON TERM LIMITS

5 “Should Congress propose a constitutional amend-
6 ment to limit the number of terms that a Member of the
7 United States House of Representatives and United
8 States Senator can serve in office?

9 “Yes No”.

10 (c) TRANSMISSION OF CERTIFIED RESULTS TO THE
11 CONGRESS, ALL MEMBERS, AND COMMITTEES ON THE
12 JUDICIARY.—The results of each State’s non binding ref-
13 erendum on the advisory question shall be certified by the
14 State election agency to the Clerk of the House of Rep-
15 resentatives and the Secretary of the Senate in the same
16 manner and at the same time of the certification of elec-
17 tion of members of the House of Representatives and Sen-
18 ate for the general election. The results shall be certified
19 by county, congressional district, and statewide totals. The
20 Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representa-
21 tives and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate,
22 in light of the results of the non binding referendum, shall
23 examine whether the Congress should propose an amend-
24 ment to the Constitution providing for term limits and
25 submit their recommendations for response to the House

1 of Representatives and Senate within 6 months after the
2 general election.

3 (d) COMMENTS REGARDING PROCEDURES FOR FU-
4 TURE NON BINDING REFERENDA.—Not later than 90
5 days after the general election, the State election agencies
6 shall forward to the Clerk of the House of Representatives
7 and the Secretary of the Senate their comments or sugges-
8 tions regarding changes or improvements in procedures
9 for conducting national non binding referenda in future
10 general elections. All such comments shall be referred to
11 the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Rep-
12 resentatives and the Committee on the Judiciary of the
13 Senate.

14 (e) REIMBURSEMENT OF COSTS.—The costs of in-
15 cluding the advisory question required by this Act shall
16 be reimbursed by the United States upon submission by
17 the State election agency of the actual costs of conducting
18 the non binding referendum in the State. All reimburse-
19 ments to State election agencies for the costs of conduct-
20 ing the non binding referendum shall be made from the
21 franking accounts of the Congress, with equal amounts
22 drawn from the franking accounts of the House of Rep-
23 resentatives and the Senate to reimburse the States for
24 such expenses. The Clerk of the House of Representatives
25 and the Secretary of the Senate shall be responsible for

- 1 ensuring the proper application for and reimbursement of
- 2 such expenses.

